

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Withdrawn) An interlocking retaining wall block, adapted for assembly into a retaining wall system including a plurality of stacked rows of at least a plurality of said blocks, said block comprising:

left, right, front and rear body portions, said front and rear body portions of said blocks being connected by said left and right body portions, defining a void therebetween;

a substantially planar lower surface of said block; and

at least a left and a right aligning element extending upwardly from an upper surface of said block, each of said aligning elements located forward of an exterior face of the rear body portion and rearward of an interior face the front body portion on each of said left and right body portions, wherein each of said aligning elements is operable to be received by the void of another one of said blocks.

2. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 1, said rear body portion comprising a rear surface defining an end of the block; and

each of said aligning elements comprising a flat rear face and extending laterally inwardly of said left and right body portions;

wherein said flat rear face is above said rear body portion and forward of said rear surface.

3. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 2, wherein each of said aligning elements is adapted to extend upwardly into the void of one of the blocks in a row stacked above to interlock therewith, and wherein the void defined by the body portions is a single void extending through said block.

4. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 1, each of said aligning elements comprising a substantially L-shaped aligning element adapted to extend upwardly into the void of one of the blocks in a row stacked above to interlock therewith.

5. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 4, wherein said second aligning portions of said left and right aligning elements are adapted to interlock with the rear body portion of the block in the row stacked above.

6. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 1, each of said left and right body portions comprising inner and outer side surfaces and the rear body portion comprising a front surface defining the void;

wherein each of said first portions of said aligning elements is flush with both of said inner and outer side surfaces of the respective body portion from which it extends and each of said second portions of said aligning elements is flush with the front surface.

7. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 1, wherein said block is operable to be secured by a stabilizing element, said block further comprising a groove including a front, rear, and bottom face, said groove operable to receive said stabilizing element.

8. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 7, wherein said groove extends laterally rearward of the front body portion and forward of the rear body portion.

9. (Withdrawn) The interlocking block of claim 7, wherein supports an anchoring element secured to the stabilizing element.

10. (Withdrawn) A method of constructing an interlocking retaining wall block, comprising the steps of:

forming left and right body portions and front and rear body portions, wherein said front and rear body portions are connected by said left and right body portions, and define a void therebetween;

forming a substantially planar lower surface of said block; and

forming at least one aligning element extending upwardly from an upper surface of said block, said aligning element comprising a forward aligning portion located forward of the rear body portion and a rear aligning portion located on the rear body portion rearward of the left and right body portions, wherein the at least one aligning element is operable to be received by the void of another one of said blocks.

11. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein the step of forming at least one aligning element includes the step of forming a substantially rectangular aligning element.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein said step of forming left and right body portions includes the steps of:

forming inner and outer side surfaces for each of said left and right body portions; and

forming a forward aligning portion flush with both of said inner and outer surfaces of the respective body portion from which it extends.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein said step of forming at least one aligning element includes the step of integrally-forming each said forward aligning portion with said rear aligning portions located rearward thereof

14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 13, wherein said step of forming left and right body portions includes the step of forming a rear surface of said rear body portion, said rear surface defining an end of the block, and each of said rear aligning portions has a flat rear face and extends laterally inwardly of said left and right body portions, and said flat rear face is above said rear body portion and forward of said rear surface.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10, wherein said step of forming at least one said aligning element comprises the step of forming a substantially L-shaped aligning element having a flat rear face extending laterally inwardly of said left and right body portions.

16. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of forming a groove rearward of said front body portion and forward of said rear body portion, said groove operable to receive a stabilizing element.

17. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 16, wherein said step of forming further comprises the step of supporting, by the block, an anchoring element secured to the stabilizing element.

18. (Previously Presented) A retaining wall block, adapted for assembly into a retaining wall system and its securement therein by a stabilizing element, said retaining wall system including a plurality of stacked rows of at least a plurality of said blocks, said block comprising:

left, right, front and rear body portions;

an interior space defined by said left, right, front, and rear body portions;

at least one alignment element extending vertically from a top surface of said block, said alignment element adapted to be removably received within said interior space of said block; and

at least one groove adapted to receive said stabilizing element, said groove extending laterally rearward of the front body portion and forward of the rear body portion or laterally between the left and right body portions;

wherein said block is adapted to be placed on a flat surface without need for preparation of said flat surface, or modification of said block.

19. (Previously Presented) The securable retaining wall block of claim 18, wherein said groove comprises a channel sufficiently deep to permit the stabilizing element to be contained therein.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Withdrawn) An interlocking retaining wall block, adapted for assembly and

securement into a retaining wall system by a stabilizing element, said system including a plurality of stacked rows of at least a plurality of said blocks, said block comprising:

left, right, front and rear body portions, said front and rear body portions of said blocks being connected by said left and right body portions, defining a void therebetween;

a substantially planar lower surface of said block;

at least a left and a right aligning element extending upwardly from an upper surface of said block, each of said aligning elements located forward of an exterior face of the rear body portion and rearward of an interior face the front body portion on each of said left and right body portions, wherein each of said aligning elements is operable to be received by the void of another one of said blocks; and

said block having formed therein a groove operable to receive said stabilizing element.

22. (Withdrawn) The interlocking retaining wall block of claim 21, wherein said groove is formed sufficiently deep to permit the stabilizing element to be contained therein.